

Innovation Case Study

The Take Back™ scheme:

Leading European carpet manufacturer Desso focuses primarily on superior floor design and Cradle to Cradle®, a design concept that takes its inspiration from nature, where recycling is universal and everything is reborn again and again in a perpetual cycle of reuse. The company is a high-profile member of Carpet Recycling UK and firmly committed to 'closing the recycling loop' by ensuring that carpet tiles are collected and recycled at the end of their serviceable lives.

Desso introduced its international Take Back™ programme to make it easier and more effective for its customers to recycle waste carpet tiles – and to reduce the burden on landfill – at no extra cost.

Under the Take Back™ scheme, all carpet tiles, with the exception of those containing PVC, can be collected and sent back to Desso's recycling plant in the Netherlands where the yarn is separated from the backing. Both material streams can then be recycled, the yarn is returned to the yarn manufacturers for production of new yarn and the bitumen backing is used in roofing and road surfacing products. Old carpet tiles in better condition can be cleaned and used again in flooring projects.

This recycling concept was an important pre-requisite in the refurbishment of Wales & West Utilities Headquarters in Newport, South Wales where Desso supplied 3,600m² of new Freestyle carpet tiles, but also recovered the old carpet tiles which were cleaned and reused in other local projects. ALC Contracts worked with project manager Carillion Property Services and Desso in a team effort to complete the contract a week ahead of schedule.

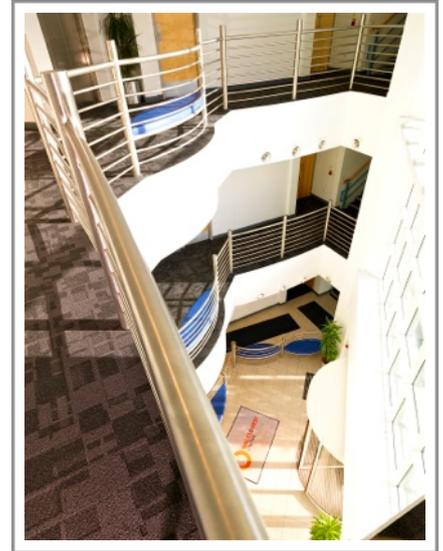
The Take Back™ programme has grown considerably since its 2010 launch and is on target to collect more than half a million tiles by the end of 2011.

Comments:

Keith Hall, Technical Director at Desso: "Cradle to Cradle® is at the heart of our business and Take Back™ is another step forward in our commitment to protecting the environment. The reuse of the Wales & West Utilities' old tiles admirably demonstrated this approach."

Martin Brooks of Commercial Carpet Solutions Ltd, based in Cookham, Berkshire: "At Commercial Carpet Solutions, we have completely embraced Desso's sustainability philosophy and find the Take Back™ programme works extremely well for us. It is efficient, reliable and provides us with the full package - collection, recycling and certification."

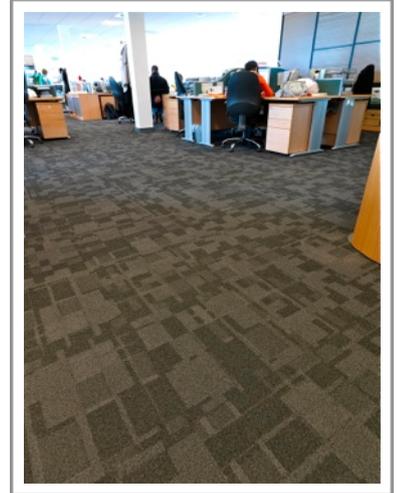
"We work on a number of high-profile projects for large corporate clients nationwide in city/town centre offices that can be difficult to access and with limited storage space. Therefore it is essential that the collection service runs smoothly and on time. There is frequently a very narrow time frame to rip out the old flooring and install the new, so it is vital to have a reliable recycling service. Efficient management of the collection service is key for us."



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John Rees, Director of Rees Flooring Ltd in Hemel Hempstead: "As a CRUK member, we fully support Desso's Take Back™ concept that diverts this flooring waste from landfill. It worked very well for us when we removed 2,000m² of old carpet tiles from a London insurance company's offices. Some were re-used in construction site offices, with the majority sent back for recycling."

Jane Gardner, Project Manager at CRUK: "As an association covering the carpet value chain and waste recovery sector, we welcome Desso's lead in actively recycling or reusing their waste carpet tiles. Their contribution is helping to reduce the amount of this bulky waste needlessly going to landfill."



Desso - what happens to returned carpet tiles:

- Re-use: carpet tiles are cleaned and reused with an audit trail provided for future recycling.
- Fuel for energy: carpet tiles are shredded, mixed with other materials and used as secondary fuel in the cement industry, or burned as a fuel to create electricity which is fed into the National Grid.
- Material recovery for recycling: carpet tile components are separated for recycling in the Desso Cradle to Cradle® development programme.
- Condition and appearance of tiles determines their most appropriate diversion from landfill route.

Reasons to recycle:

- Waste carpet tiles can be recycled at a cost comparable to that of landfill; rising landfill costs will make recycling even more cost-effective in the future.
- Desso manages material recovery and provides certification to verify the recycling destination, quantity and type of material.
- Advanced approach to sustainability differentiates your business and attracts customers who value companies with 'green' credentials.
- Helps to reduce the ever-increasing burden on landfill.



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